

MEETING MINUTES
Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee
James Monroe Building
101 N. 14th Street, Jefferson Conference Room
Richmond, VA 23219
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
October 13, 2016

Attendees: Debra Cargill, Dr. Sharon Mullen, Maurice Oliver, Ellen Osborne, Katharine Parrish, Sharon Renner, Anna Rice-Wright, Linda Seyer, Bruce Sobczak, Senator William Stanley, Jr.
VDOE Staff: Lolita Hall, George Willcox, Beverly Godwin, Jenna Kelly, Dr. Sue Mansfield, Thomas Suh and Hillary Major, Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC).

Opening Remarks and Welcome - Bruce Sobczak, Advisory Committee Member
Mr. Sobczak welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of May 11, 2016, Minutes

A motion was made and seconded, and the minutes were approved.

VDOE Organizational Changes - George Willcox, Associate Director, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

- Effective July 25, 2016, the Office of Adult Education and Literacy was merged into the Office of Career and Technical Education. A letter was sent to the U.S. Department of Education announcing the merger and how it will increase VDOE's capacity to connect adults to workforce skills programming.
- The organizational chart for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education was introduced along with an overview of staff roles. The organizational structure strives to leverage the strengths of all staff members in the unit.
- Mr. Willcox discussed the vision and mission of the Virginia Board of Education. In addition, there are seven goals for public education for 2012-2017 which should be at the center of the committee's work. Mr. Willcox shared information concerning the role of advisory committees and that the primary purpose is to advise, assist, and provide support for quality education. Mr. Willcox further shared that credentialing is a top priority of Governor McAuliffe.

Advisory Committee Discussion

The committee members introduced themselves and discussed their professional backgrounds; focusing on how they can contribute to the goals and work of the committee.

Highlights of discussion:

- There needs to be a continued focus on breaking down silos and increasing collaboration among adult education programs, training providers and employers.
- The Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) is a respected credential once employers have a better understanding of what it signifies.
- The Northstar Digital Literacy certification is a good option that should be more accessible in adult education.
- Employee soft skills are very important to employers. Adult students should be immersed in a learning environment that enforces professional soft skills.

Adult Education and Literacy Updates - Presented by Adult Education Staff

- **Financial Update - Roberta Gargiulo, Adult Education Grants Manager**
 - An overview was provided of the different federal and state adult education grant funding streams. A new competition will occur in 2017-2018 for the federal adult education grants.
- **2015-2016 National Reporting System (NRS) Data - Thomas Suh, Data Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist**
 - A snapshot of NRS 2015-2016 adult education data was provided in the following areas: adult enrollment, average adult attendance, number of adults post-tested, post-test percentage, and educational gain.
- **High School Equivalency (HSE) Update - Dr. Sue Mansfield, HSE Specialist**
 - The revisions to the *High School Equivalency Examination Guidelines for Virginia* were approved by the Board of Education. The second round of applications will begin on October 10, 2016 and HSE vendors will have an opportunity to re-apply. In January 2017, a decision will be made regarding any newly approved HSE tests. An implementation committee has convened to discuss and develop a preliminary plan if additional HSE tests are added. Any approved tests will go into effect on July 1, 2017.
 - Statewide GED® testing statistics were shared. The number of passers since 2014 (when the GED® test changed) has more than doubled. Paper-based testing opportunities have been extended to the local and regional jails that have not yet converted to computer-based testing.
- **Implementing College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) in Adult Education - Hillary Major, VALRC, Instructional Standards and Communications Specialist**
 - An update was provided on the Standards in Action initiative, through which training has been provided to nearly 100 instructors and program specialists representing all 22 adult education regions. The project has grown from piloting to scaling across the state. Priorities for this year include programs facilitating professional learning communities (PLCs) on an ongoing basis, strategic planning for monitoring and evaluation, and developing a curriculum framework that is contextualized and CCRS-aligned to serve as a resource for programs and instructors around the state.
- **National External Diploma Program (NEDP) Update - Beverly Godwin, Adult Secondary and ISAEP Specialist**
 - Since the last advisory committee meeting, the *NEDP Guidelines in Virginia* were administratively approved and have been posted to the VDOE Adult Secondary web page. NEDP, a program of Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS), serves as an adult high school completion option. Training opportunities continue to be provided for new and existing program sites.
- **2016-2017 Federal Grants Update - Jenna Kelly, Federal Programs and Career Pathways Specialist**
 - The priorities of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act grant for 2016-2017 include strengthening relationships with local workforce development boards, developing partnerships, bridging the gap between English Language Learners and Adult Basic Education programs, distance education, and standards-based instruction.

- The key shifts in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education grant include standards-based instruction, workforce development partnerships and integrated education and training programs.

Closing Comments from Advisory Committee Members:

Mr. Sobczak asked the committee to share their biggest takeaways from today's meeting. Highlights of discussion:

- With the retirement of many baby boomers, the workforce needs will be even greater in a few years. Adult Education programs must work with business and industry. From an employer standpoint the cost of replacing and retraining new employees is substantial.
- Benchmarking is important in finding out what is working well and identifying best practices that can be replicated; also looking at case studies and actual evidence of what works. Most employers would prefer for education providers to educate and train workers versus them (the employer) having to design training programs. There must be ongoing dialogue between educators and representatives from business and industry, and both entities must seek to better understand one another.
- Collaboration among programs is critical. Integrated program models need to be expanded. Adult education has an important place in the workforce system.

Mr. Sobczak asked the committee to think about their recommendations for specific and realistic goals that can guide the committee's work. The committee should consider developing a comprehensive report with reasonable action items that are laser focused and targeted. Key ideas included:

- Marketing the CRC to employers and educating them on additional HSE options.
- Providing guidance to adult education programs on how to effectively align programs with integrated education and training.
- Connecting with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce and educating them on the various credentials that certify that an individual is skilled and work-ready.
- Increasing communication between adult education and colleges.

Ms. Hall thanked the committee for their attendance and discussions. The overarching vision for adult education is providing opportunities for adults to earn industry credentials in high demand fields, leading to sustainable employment. The advisory committee will be instrumental in determining how adult education can engage business and industry in a meaningful way.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

Next Meeting:

March 9, 2017